
PERFORMANCE PROFILE FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ROC THE FUTURE ALLIANCE



THE ORGANIZATION

ROC the Future Alliance (“RTFA” or “the Organization” or “the Alliance”) is a community collaboration of over 60 Rochester area organizations that have committed to aligning strategies and resources to improve the academic achievement and quality of life of Rochester’s children. The Rochester community has strived for years to improve educational outcomes for its children through the well-intentioned but siloed efforts of various educational initiatives and programs from government entities, school districts, corporations and non-profits, but with limited system-wide results. ROC the Future Alliance evolved from community conversations beginning in 2011 and started to take shape in 2012 after meeting with Strive Together, a national federation that developed a proven framework for helping communities improve educational outcomes. Today ROC the Future Alliance is one of 70 communities across the country who follow the Strive Together model to achieve dramatically improved educational and employment results for youth.

While Strive Together has identified seven outcomes critical to dramatically improving the education of youth held back by inequities in opportunity and achievement, RTFA is concentrating current efforts on the following three: **kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, and high school graduation rates.**

Results to date: Over ten years now as an Alliance, ROC the Future Partners have overseen a dramatic expansion of early pre-K and pre-K opportunities for children, an increase in summer learning opportunities, and an increase in the RCSD graduation rate from 50% to 70%.

To accomplish this work under the Strive Together model, RTFA adopted a “collective impact” organizational framework. Collective impact is an approach to problem-solving that recognizes that “no single organization has the ability to solve any major social problem at scale by itself.” *ROC the Future Alliance is currently structured in the following constituent components:*

Partners – Approximately 60 organizations who are committed to RTFA’s mission and work under the umbrella of the Alliance.

Conveners – A subset of partners who have made a higher-level sustained commitment to improving the educational and lifelong outcomes of Rochester youth. Convener organizations include the Rochester City School District (“RCSD”), non-profits, employers and funders and oversee the work and structure of RTFA. Conveners meet bi-monthly.

The Executive Committee is a subset of Conveners overseeing strategic and operational processes of the Alliance. The Executive Committee meets monthly. A Governance Committee oversees the governance

processes, by-laws, and nominations for Convener and officer roles and meets as needed. A recently approved Funding Alignment Team, comprised of some of RTFA funders, will be launched in the coming months.

Outcomes Teams are topic-specific working groups comprised of Partners who develop specific strategies and implementation plans that make RTFA’s goals a reality. There are currently four outcomes teams: Early Grade Literacy Outcomes Team (“EGLOT”), School Readiness Outcomes Team (“SROT”), Community Schools Leadership Team (“CSLT”), and the High School Graduation Outcomes Team (“HSGOT”). Engaged parents contribute their voice and leadership to RTFA’s work through the activities of the Parent Engagement Collaborative Action Network (“PECAN”).

Backbone refers to the RTFA staff of eight, including the Executive Director. Staff members facilitate, organize and amplify the work of the Alliance, providing the “connective tissue” between the efforts of all involved. “Backbone” is a defined term used in collective impact work, meant to underscore the fact that RTFA staff doesn’t “own” the work of the initiative – Partners and Conveners “own” it. The annual budget of the backbone organization has grown significantly, from \$1.3M to \$2.6M as a result of a significant multi-year grant. The Alliance is funded by a combination of community and foundation grants, government funding and individual philanthropy.

Anchor Entity refers to the Children’s Institute, a non-profit Convener organization that hosts RTFA. Children’s Institute supports the Backbone and related work processes of RTFA.

THE OPPORTUNITY

STRATEGIST AND ADVOCATE

The next leader of RTFA has an opportunity to make a transformational impact on the Greater Rochester community. Serving as only the third leader of the organization, the challenging work of identifying partners, establishing long-range goals, setting up the Alliance’s organizational structure and establishing a common language and shared point-of-view is in the rear-view mirror. The next leader will shift the Alliance’s efforts from building the organization to driving system-wide improvements. The leader of Strive Together has observed that, “If the goal is population change, the solution is systems change, and the impact of COVID really proved that to us.” The next leader will continue the journey from identifying complex intertwined root causes for the failure of our current educational system, like structural racism and inconsistent definitions in pursuit of social justice, to moving RTFA partners to execute on real systemic change.

SAVVY RELATIONSHIP-BUILDER

RTFA staff and Conveners are already motivated and engaged; the job is now more about coalescing and deepening their efforts and the efforts of others. Collective Impact moves at the speed of trust. The next Executive Director must be skilled at earning and fostering trust among others to move the Alliance forward. The Alliance’s conveners are seeking an experienced community strategist and organizational leader who is as comfortable getting to know CEOs and elected officials as getting to know parents at kitchen tables. The successful candidate will have a legendary track record for active listening and reliable follow-through and an inquisitive, non-judgmental nature that leads to long-lasting, trusting relationships. The next leader will be fearless, calling partners in and holding them accountable to their commitments by asking tough questions when necessary.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Alliance is still in the process of “becoming” as one Convener recently observed, and the transition to a new anchor entity has just completed its initial year. Organizational structure and underlying project management processes are still evolving, and the next leader will be charged with directing the activity of others to fill in the blanks. The successful candidate will enjoy developing the anchor relationship and talents of staff, converting managers into proactive leaders and extending the reach of a small but highly engaged team.

Lastly, the next Executive Director will be onboarding and directing the efforts of several new staff members who are being hired to execute on the goals of a recently funded Whole Child Initiative grant. This grant moves the Alliance forward towards being a community convening space for the development of policy and advocacy, focusing efforts on reducing racial disparities and helping children and families thrive. Building out the concept behind this grant will be a defining moment for the new leader, as the work defined therein is a paradigm step up to true systems change work.

WHY YOU?

If you are an experienced, energetic and optimistic community builder who also appreciates the difficulty of unknitting the interwoven impact that structural racism and a lack of social justice has had on the success of economically disadvantaged youth, please take pause to review this rare opportunity. RTFA's staff is passionate about the mission, Conveners have shown unwavering financial, intellectual and physical support for the work at hand, and Rochesterians who are fatigued with being underestimated are fully engaged in this effort to realize a new future for their youth. Achieving audacious goals is in Rochester's DNA; we are the home to the legacies of trailblazers like Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass. We are one of the most generous communities in the country by all measures, from possessing the highest number of not-for-profit organizations for a city of our size to the largest amount of per capita giving in the nation. If you are a bridge-builder with a reputation for working across organizations to effect big change, we have all the ingredients you are seeking for your next challenge.

GOALS

Within the first twelve to eighteen months, the Executive Director will:

- Within three months, meet one-on-one with each Convener, committee chairs, chairs of the Outcomes Teams, and co-chairs of PECAN to gain an understanding of why they are involved and their vision for how their involvement can best be leveraged to meet RTFA's mission.
- Renew Convener member agreements and Partner agreements with RTFA, documenting actionable commitments and tracking progress/accountability for Partner contributions to Alliance work.
- Develop a process to coach Conveners to involve staff at lower levels in their organizations, including building RTFA goals into staff performance appraisals.
- Work towards building a more trusting, thoughtful relationship with the Rochester City School District ("RCSD") by: meeting with multiple levels of authority in the organization to ask for their input and ideas; looking for synergies with RCSD's existing strategic plan and involving more RCSD staff at various levels on Outcomes Teams.
- Develop an effective onboarding process and periodic review process for Conveners and staff members.
- Provide leadership and operational support for staff, moving from "owning" to facilitating RTFA work where the mutually reinforcing roles of Conveners are optimized.
- Team with Conveners, backbone and anchor staff to execute on the goals of the Whole Child Initiative grant.
- Direct the creation of an inventory repository of the skills of each individual RTFA Partner that can be used as a tool to help the backbone staff and fellow Partners to identify whom to call upon for assistance with specific questions and initiatives.
- Consult with other Strive Together partnerships to learn best practices from those who are farther along in advocacy and policy change work.

- Work with Partners to identify highest priority policy and advocacy initiatives that would be the most impactful for RTFA outcomes.
- Team with staff and the Executive Committee to develop a dashboard to track progress against identified initiatives.
- Continue to develop and integrate with RTFA governance and anchor entity roles to deepen and broaden these reinforcing relationships in support of the Alliance goals.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will possess the following:

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. A master's degree in business, public policy, political science, social work or other degrees relevant to RTFA's mission is preferred.
- Prior experience in the leadership role or as a member of the senior management team of an organization of at least a comparable size and complexity, including responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the organization and managing others through influence. If prior experience was acquired outside of the not-for-profit or government sectors, leadership experience should be supplemented by prior experience serving on one or more not-for-profit boards.
- Proven experience managing complex projects to a successful conclusion, including goal setting, data analysis, result measurement, delegation and holding stakeholders accountable for results.
- Experience with advocacy and policy change.
- Preference will be given for candidates with experience working within a Collective Impact or comparable community-ownership model.
- Experience with systems change; experience with systems change in education is a plus
- Preference will be given to those with personal experience connecting with the economically vulnerable
- Candidates who aren't from Rochester must relocate to Rochester within 90 days of accepting employment.
- A reputation for a transparent and direct management style with prior organizations under management.
- A reputation for active listening born of an insatiable curiosity and the humility of knowing that there is much to learn from the input of others.
- Unquestioned professional and personal integrity.

This description is not meant to be an all-inclusive list of duties and responsibilities but constitutes a general definition of position scope. In support of the ADA, this job description lists only the responsibilities and qualifications deemed essential to the position. RTFA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, genetic predisposition, veteran status or status as a member of any other protected group or activity.

HOW TO APPLY/MAKE INQUIRIES:

This retained search is being conducted exclusively by Patty Phillips of Clarity Recruiting and Career Management, Inc. for the ROC the Future Alliance. All applications and inquiries, regardless of how sourced, will be forwarded

to her attention. If interested, please submit a cover letter and resume to: patty@clarityracm.com. In your cover letter, please explain the basis for your interest in the position and highlight relevant experience for the role.